

MANX

TALES



By Various Authors.



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"What the Herb Did."

A TALE OF THE PEEL HERRING FISHERY.

I am an old man now, and have given up goin' to the fishin'; but it is still a pleasure to me to stroll down to the quay and watch the boats leaving the harbour for the fishing grounds. The boats now-a-days are certainly smarter-looking than when I went to sea first, nearly half a century ago. Still, I think the men themselves have many of the old-time notions.

For instance, one Spring when the boats were ready for the Kinsale fishing, I noticed two boats leave the harbour fastened side by side with ropes. Two nickeys had left, and rather than anyone would venture out third this was the method adopted to prevent the bad luck supposed to attend the third boat to leave.

Another day, I noticed a lugger all ready for sea; the sails were half hoisted, and the crew seemed to be impatiently waiting for something. Presently, the skipper's little daughter came running down the quay, and tossed a small package on the vessel's deck. It was picked up carefully by her father; then the mooring ropes were cast off, and the boat glided out to sea.

Of course the package contained the herb, which was supposed to guarantee safety of life and prosperity in the prosecution of their fishing, for that season at least.

I am not exactly superstitious, but I do faithfully believe in the herb, and I will tell you why.

When quite a young man I was one of the crew of a lugger called the "Victory." She was quite a smart craft in her day too. Like most of the boats of that time she was half decked. The foc'sle was covered in, but the after part was open. The crew consisted of men both from the town and country. As it happened the Peel men were superstitious, but those from the country were singularly free from what they termed "boghned."

The fleet then did not start for the "herrins" as early as at the present time, and it was in the beginning of June when we made a start. I can remember it well. It was a lovely day, and the old town was full of business and excitement.

The quay especially was thronged with carts from the country, carrying the fishermen's belongings, and the town carts laden with ropes and nets and sails. There was lusty laughter and shouting as old friends met, and then an adjournment to the nearest public house in Castle-street, where the jough was cheap and plentiful.

All along the quayside lay the schooners and large smacks for which Peel at that time was famous.

Outside, in tiers of five or six, lay the fishing boats, the crews on board busily employed in measuring stoppers or blowing mollags and finishing the "lil carthags" needed before leaving the harbour.

Just as I was stepping on board our boat the old harbour master called out, "Ha' thaa gor tha jar, Juan?"

"Aw, deed, man, we wud'n forget that."

"An' tha harb?"

"Aw' deed," ses I, "us fellas from the north arn' believin' in them nonsense now."

Then he says, "There's goan' to be a reg'lar howl-on abur tha third boat. Will ye chonce it, Juan?"

"Aw, deed we will, if i's our turn," says Thom Beg from Kir'michael. "Some of you Peel fellas is wuss nor haythen itself."

By four o'clock in the afternoon a couple of boats had set sail and slipped out. Then there was a long delay. Scores of boats were in readiness, but none attempted to move for sea. At last the crews began to get fidgetty, but still no one would venture to be the unlucky third boat to leave the harbour.

At last Thom Beg lost all patience, and said, "Are we goan' to lose a shot because a few Peel govags are scar'd to go third boat? Les go and chonce it." Some of the men grumbled and said it was tempting Providence, and no good would come of it; others said to risk it. So at last we cast off our mooring springs, set the mainsail, and started for sea.

We had scarcely left the harbour when the whole fleet were on the move, and after us in a body. As we went round the Horse, all hands reverently raised their caps, and some of us breathed a silent prayer to God for protection and blessing during the coming hours of darkness.

Well, we opened the Calf and let her run off for a bit, and then just at dusk shot our nets. Before turning in we all knelt down on the deck, and each man said his own simple prayer, and then quietly rose and either turned into his bunk or stayed up to fish with hand lines for cod or ling.

We hauled next morning, but it was all "black nets." We did not see even the face of a fish.

As this was our first shot, and the nets dry, we did not mind it so much, especially as the general fishings were light all through the fleet.

But week after week went by, and there was little improvement. Sometimes we would get a few hundreds, and then again we would barely have enough for breakfast in the morning. The crew grumbled openly, and said that we were the most unlucky boat in the fleet, and the cause was attributed, of course, to the

fact of our leaving the harbour the third. One man suggested that the skipper should call at "Ballayeigh," down Jurby way, and tell him our case and ask for the herb.

"Well," he said, "I will be at home at Ballaugh on Sunday, and I will call on him early on Monday morning. Anyhow, he can do no harm, and we can scarcely be any worse off than we have been." All agreed to the plan except Thom Beg, who said he would have nothing to do with it.

On the following Monday the skipper came again to town, and he carried with him the "herb" that was to remove our bad luck.

He told us that "Ballayeigh" took him out in his garden and plucked a small bunch of vervaine, and gave it to him, telling him to boil it in a little water in the boat's pot, and when shooting sprinkle some of the water on each net as it went over the vessel's side. That night, when shooting at sunset, the skipper sprinkled each man's nets with the charmed water. When Thom Beg's nets appeared, the skipper was about to christen them, when Thom indignantly called out, "Howl on theer. None o' thar slop on my nets!" So his went without, but the others to the end of the train were each sprinkled.

In the morning we started to haul, and the nets came in bright and sparkling with fish. Net after net had fished well, until we came to Thom Beg's nets, and they both came up black and empty, and without even a govag. The nets following were again full of fish, and continued so right out to the tail net.

Altogether, we lifted over sixty mease of good herring, which we sold at a pound a mease.

You see I am not saying anything about the herb, either for or against, but I have told you simply of what actually occurred.



“The Smugglers of Port Soderick.”

About three miles from Douglas by road, and about six by sea, lies Port Soderick; its beautiful glen stretching right down to the sea. The south part of this glen, now known as Crogga, was, according to tales told by old residents, the rendezvous of fairies and bug-ganes; but the subject of my story is of those very much mortal fairies the smugglers, whose cave was at the shore end of the glen. It was in this cave they used to secrete contraband cargo at night, and, so cunningly was it hid, that any person going through the cave in the day time would never notice anything out of place. Towards the end of last century, folks in the neighbourhood had noticed lights going into the cave at night, and a small schooner had also been discerned lying in the bay, always leaving in time to get well out to sea before daylight. The news soon got about that smugglers were using the cave, till at last they reached the ears of a smart young revenue officer, named John Tate, who determined to capture them if possible. Now John Tate was in love with the only daughter of old Jimmy Caveen, a fisherman-farmer, whose land ran down to the mouth of this cave; and it was on one of his courting visits that Tate first heard of the smugglers, from the lips of his sweet-heart Kitty Caveen. She told him, in confidence, that no person in the neighbourhood knew anything about them, and that they were

strangers to the place. It was said that her father, old Jimmy Caveen, kept himself in touch with both revenue men and smugglers. The latter he termed respectable traders, for he looked on smuggling as no crime. In his younger days he had helped to run many a cargo, and knew the coast of the Island as well as he knew his way about his own farm. He also knew most of the fishermen who had done a bit of smuggling, but these new arrivals at the cave puzzled him. He had watched them from the cliffs at night, and had come to the conclusion that they were foreigners. At that time there existed a great jealousy between home smugglers and foreign ones, so he did not care how soon the latter were caught.

Old Caveen and his daughter were returning home one night from a visit to some neighbour's when they overtook Tate, who was sauntering along the road leading to the beach. No doubt he knew Kitty was visiting some friends with her father. "Good evening, Mr Caveen," said Tate, respectfully raising his cap to Kitty at the same time. "Good everin, sor. Why, bless me, if it's not Mr Tate himself that's in. And how are yer gettin' on this long time?" said the bluff old fisherman-farmer, shaking hands heartily with the young revenue officer. "Very well, very well indeed, sir," answered Tate, as the trio proceeded along in the direction of the farmhouse. "No doubt you have heard of the seizure of contraband goods we made about a month ago down at Kirk Michael? Those Northside men are very smart. They wanted no caves to hide their stuff in. After beaching their goods they filled the bodies of carts (that were on the beach on the pretence of getting wraick) with their smuggled goods, covered them over with wraick, then carted them inland. One of our men, however, proved too smart for them, and by careful watching he located the place where they had all their stuff planted. We confiscated the goods, of course, but the smugglers

escaped us. Although I know very well who they were, still we had no evidence to substantiate our arresting them."

"Well, well, now, I never heard the le'k. Man alive, now, but they war smart, terbil," said old Caveen, who knew all about the capture from an old friend of his who lived down the North. Privately, his sympathies were with the men who had their cargo confiscated. "Yes," assented Tate, "they are very clever, and I have no doubt they will outwit us again, and in some way make up for the loss they have sustained."

"Aw, well, well, theer's no tellin', man ; theer's no tellin'," said old Caveen. "I suppose thou have thee eyes on somethan down this side, too, Mr Tate ?"

"Well," answered Tate, "I will take you into my confidence, Mr Caveen. It seems to be a pretty open secret about here that a band of smugglers have been using the old cave. I intend to keep a pretty good look out to-night for them. My men are stationed along the cliffs, within hail. I myself intend to watch the cave."

By this time they had reached the farmhouse, and old Caveen invited the young man in to have some supper, it being still early in the night. Young Tate accepted the invitation, not because he was hungry, but it afforded him an opportunity of having a chat with Kitty.

After a supper of home-made bread, cheese, beer, and pinjane, Tate and the old man had a smoke and chat about the fishing, crops, and so on. Tate then bid the old man good night, for he knew Kitty was waiting for him in the porch. "Well, good night, Mr Tate, and take care of yerself, sor, for theer's no tellin' what a dangerous lot they might be," said the old farmer.

"I will try to, Mr Caveen," replied Tate. "I am well armed, though I should dislike very much to use firearms against any man. Good night, sir, and thank you for your hospitality.'

Kitty, as he had anticipated, was waiting in the porch to bid him good night, but lovers somehow take a long time to say "good night," and it was near midnight before Tate said his final adieux. Who could blame him, for had not Kitty promised that night to be his bride? "Good night, Jack dear," she said to him, "and do for my sake be careful of yourself to-night, for I had such a frightful dream last night. I dreamt that I saw you tied to a stake, with gorse and shipwreck heaped round you. An evil-looking man was about to apply a torch to it, when I screamed and woke up."

"Kitty, dearest," said Tate, "when you are my wife I shall expect you to give up these superstitions about dreams, magpies, cats, and things, which I can plainly see that you, in common with the majority of Manx folk, have still a tendency to believe. One kiss more, dearest, then 'Good night.'"

Kitty watched him descend the long field in front of the house. The moon, which was in the last quarter, was obscured by a cloud. She still had a presentiment something would happen to him. Suddenly she saw him fall full length on the ground. Her heart almost stopped beating. He had not been shot she felt sure, for there was no report. Perhaps he had tripped and sprained his ankle. Her father had gone to bed she knew. Being a courageous girl, she determined to find out what had befallen her lover before disturbing the household. Twisting her shawl round her head, she ran down the field to where he lay. "Jack, Jack, whatever is the matter?" she cried.

"Hush-sh, hush-sh, Kitty darling," answered Tate in a low voice, "for goodness sake don't make a noise. I have discovered a new cave, which I think branches off the old one. Coming down the field, I perceived what I thought to be a glowworm. On closer examination it proved to be a light coming from a

small hole in the ground, made very likely by a field rat. Putting my ear to the hole, I could hear voices murmuring below in a foreign language, which I believe to be French. Anyhow I will soon find out, for I intend to spy on them in the cave."

"But Jack, dear, said Kitty, you will call your men together first. I trust you will not be so foolhardy as to insist on going in yourself."

"Listen, Kitty," said Tate. "The signal agreed upon between our men is that if any of us should discover anything, to fire one pistol shot. Knowing you to be a brave girl Kitty, I am resolved to find out how many there are in before signalling to my men. I will give you my watch and pistol, dear. If I am not back before half-an-hour, you will fire one barrel, and tell my men where I have gone. You will do this darling, I know, for not only does it mean promotion for me if successful, but a better and more lucrative life for us both in future. Kitty, after faintly protesting about his safety at first, finally acquiesced, and the young officer proceeded in the direction of the cave's mouth. Taking off his boots some distance before reaching it, he crept cautiously forward, as he expected a sentry would be posted at the entrance. His surmise was correct, for there sure enough was a man leaning against a huge rock. Tate, after watching this man for a few minutes, noticed he never stirred. Approaching nearer, he found out that he was in a drunken sleep. Therefore, Tate had no trouble in reaching the entrance of the inner cave. The latter was shaped having, of course, two entrances. In the centre of this cave where Tate now was, lights were hung, suspended by staves driven in a gravelly floor. Small kegs of French brandy and other contraband goods were stacked along the sides. Proceeding, Tate entered the inner cave, which was so narrow in places that he had to squeeze himself through.

He had not gone far before he heard footsteps and voices coming in his direction. Looking round for some suitable place to hide in, he found nothing but bare rocky sides. There was nothing to do but return to the outer cave and hide among the smuggled goods. He was just emerging through one of the narrow places on his way back, when he was suddenly seized and gagged, but not without a struggle.

"Ah, you Revenue Bulldog" said a rough voice in French, "I guess you have bit yourself this time. Why," he said, peering into Tate's face, "if this is not the man who captured my mates last year!"

The other smugglers, hearing the scuffle, hastened to where Tate and his captor were ; they held a consultation as to what they would do with him. Tate, who understood French, heard with horror that he was to be tied to a stake and burnt, in revenge for having captured some members of their gang the year before. They carried him to the outer cave, bound him to a barrel filled with stones, and began to heap gorse and barrel staves round him ; Tate's thoughts were of Kitty outside. The time was up now he was almost sure. Would they never come ? "Hark ! there was the signal now," as the faint echo of a report was heard in the cave. The smugglers heard it too, for they stopped in their preparations for a moment. It also woke the drunken sentry outside, who now came lumbering in, saying he could see men running in the direction of the cave.

"Get ready to leave by the south entrance" cried the captain of the smugglers. The order was unnecessary, as most of the men were already in the entrance. Then picking up a burning torch he advanced towards Tate : "You English Revenue Bloodhound," he said, "you were the means of sending my brother to a living death last year. I shall avenge him by burning you, his captor, to death." So

saying, he applied the torch to the gorse ; but at that moment a report rang out from the other side of the cave, and the French smuggler captain fell face forward on the fire he had kindled. Two of his gang dragged him out, just as Kitty bounded in. Picking up a knife, which one of the smugglers had dropped, she cut at the cords that bound her lover, who was soon dragged out of danger. Tate's men now came rushing in, and chased the smugglers to the waters edge, discharging their pistols at them. Too late, however, for the smugglers were well out to sea in their small boats to a schooner which was seen beating in towards them. The only reply they got to their pistol volley was a hard mocking laugh. Some of the revenue men remembered hearing that laugh before at an encounter they had had with French smugglers the previous year.

A short time after a happy marriage was solemnised at Old Kirk Braddan. John Tate, the bridegroom, received his well-earned promotion, and afterwards left with Kitty Tate, *alias* Caveen, his brave wife, for their new home on the south coast of England,

Another generation has passed and we find John Tate and his wife comfortably settled down in their English home. He is relating to his children the story of how their mother risked her life to save his from the vengeance of the smugglers of Port Soderick.



Under the Bushel.

BY IVAN CAIN.

Joshua Gawne, the village schoolmaster, who went to his long home many years ago, was a neighbour of mine; and, now and then, I used to spend an evening with him and his family. I remember sitting with him at his parlour fire, one wild night, discussing something which I really forgot just now, when my friend's youngest son interrupted us by asking his father to tell a story. "A story?" exclaimed Joshua. "And what shall it be about pray?"

"Oh! a fairy story, tell us a fairy story?"

"Well," said their father, "Let me sit in the corner, and all of you bring your chairs round the fire and I'll try to tell you a story."

Then he commenced. I shall do my best to relate the yarn as he told it:—

When I was a little boy like you, Charlie (began my friend turning to his youngest son), I used to spend my holidays with my grandmother. She would have just delighted you, for I never knew anyone who could beat her at telling fairy tales.

The story which I am about to relate, she told me while we were rucking hay together in the field one day.

It seems that my grandmother had a cousin named Jack Clucas, and, according to her yarn, Jack married the nicest girl in the village. They lived happily together for about six months after marriage, and they loved each other sincerely.

But one evening Jack came home from the fields, and found the house door open, but there was no one inside. Thinking his wife might be in the cowhouse, he walked over to it, and shouted—"Ar thar thare, Lizzie, gal?" But there was no answer.

By this time he had become alarmed, for such

a thing had never happened before. At all the neighbours' houses he diligently enquired for his wife, and afterwards spent the whole night searching the roads and meadows—sick at heart with a new sadness, yet hoping to find his dear Lizzie--but in vain.

Three years had passed away, and his wife's disappearance was still a profound mystery. No one had ever heard of her since that eventful night three years before.

"Poor Lizzie! poor Lizzie!" Jack was wont to say, "may've she went an' dhroundid herself, pore crayther."

Thus Jack was beginning to think that his wife was dead, and was beginning to look out for another wife. This time he chose one who was much older than himself."

The couple were married at the parish church, and the wedding again revived the gossip about his first wife's strange disappearance, and my grandmother said the affair was a "nine days' talk."

About two years after this Jack Clucas and some of his neighbours sat up on Old Christmas Eve to "watch the myrrh," which always sprung up and flowered on this night in Jack's garden. As was their custom, several villagers had gathered, and were anxiously awaiting the miracle which (my grandmother vouched) was to be seen in the garden every Old Christmas Eve.

It was a clear, frosty night, the stars never seemed more brilliant nor more beautifully cold, and the ground was quite hard.

"It'll not come up tinnite," said one of the watchers, "the groun' iss too hard."

"O'll bet thee it will," replied another, "because Owl Christmas Day is the rale one, and the flowerin' of the myrrh shows that Christ was born on that day."

Just then Jack Clucas, who had been watching, keenly, for its appearance shouted (and his voice seemed to spoil the solemn stillness of the starlit midnight hour), "Come, here! come here! iss comin'! Quick."

And sure enough the little plant was slowly bursting through the frozen ground. In less than an hour the myrrh had appeared and flowered in two or three places in the garden, and the flowers and stalks were eagerly plucked by the watchers.

The clock had just struck two, and Jack's neighbours had gone home again. And as he stood alone in the garden, he felt something prompting him to visit the barn. He tried to shake it off, telling himself that the barn was all right. Indeed he didn't relish the idea of going there at such an unearthly hour. Yet there seemed to be some power, which was fast becoming irresistible, impelling him to go; and, eventually, he left the garden, and walked rapidly towards the barn. But, at the door, he hesitated for a moment, then entered, trembling with fear.

For a minute or two, he saw nothing, and was about to retreat when he saw, slowly advancing from the opposite end of the barn, a troop of fairies, all mounted on horses. When about half-way through the barn the leader dismounted, and commanded his followers to halt and trim their lamps, which were stuck in their tiny caps. But the animal upon which the leader rode did not halt—it came on towards poor Jack Clueas, who stood there, half-dead with fear. When it stood right in front of him, Jack recognised—

Now what do you think he recognised? (interrogated my friend.) He recognised his first wife, his darling Lizzie!

There she stood before him, with the body of a mare and her own pretty neck and head. Excepting a few wrinkles, her handsome face had not altered. Jack stared, and thought he was dreaming. That was all he could do; because he was paralyzed with amazement, and could neither act nor speak.

"Listen, for I've on'y a few minits to speake to thee," said his wife. "Five years ago, when thou war out wurkin' in the fields, the fairies

came and stole me, jus' when it was gettin' dark ; an' aver since I've been a mare for the leader to ride on. But thare's a chance for me to escape yet. A week to-night, we will pass through the barn again. Take all the straw out of the barn for that night. Don't lave any straw in. Stan' where thou're stan'in' now ; an' when thou'll see me passin' thee, grip my bridle, an' howl on ; an' I'll be my rale self an' free again. Go, now, tell nobody about what thou've seen. Remember, a week to-night."

Without uttering a word, Jack fled down the barn steps like a deer, and did not stop till safe within his own house. His wife was in bed asleep, consequently she did not see his white face and trembling form.

Jack did not sleep that night, nor did he do much work the next day. And sure enough there was no wonder, for the poor fellow was in a pretty fix. His wife's face had aroused his old love for her. He knew that the law would not allow him two wives, and he knew equally well that in order to bring about that which would result in securing that happiness and peace, which he and Lizzie, no doubt, craved for, would occasion the woman now living with him intense anguish and a life-long misery.

Now in such a perplexing and desperate strait, what could the poor man do ? Well, I'll tell you what he did. He removed the straw from the barn, and of course this aroused his wife's curiosity ; and although at first Jack evaded her questions with all kinds of excuses, she harassed him so that Jack could put her off no longer, and finished by blurting out the truth. When she knew all, she was at first furious, and tried to induce her husband to abandon his scheme. She, however, soon regained her usual composure, and agreed with her husband that the barn should be cleaned, and his wife rescued. For his sake, said she, she would go back to her parents again, and would take her little son with her.

To Jack, the thought of separation from his

little boy, whom he loved better than his own life, was like tearing the quivering flesh from the bone. He had now to choose between the two things he loved best. He must accept the one course and reject the other, for he could not have both.

Jack's love for Lizzie was supreme, and conquered. He swept the barn and removed every straw. Everything was now in readiness, and Jack had not the least shadow of a doubt as to his success. His wife, too, was singularly cheerful, and comforted and encouraged him. But had he known that woman's design, and had he seen the jealousy which coiled round her heart, he would have locked and bolted her in a room till the fatal night was past. But he did not know. Nor did he see her steal out cautiously in the dark, after he had removed the straw and swept the barn, and place a wisp of straw under the bushel in the barn. They say everything comes to those who wait, and the night on which Jack was to rescue his wife from the fairies came too.

At the appointed time, Jack ascended with much trepidation the barn steps, and waited with feverish impatience the coming event. Once again he saw the fairy troop advance towards where he stood. On and on with steady march they came; nor did they halt this time to trim their lamps. When their leader was about to pass him, Jack grasped his wife's bridle; and as he did so, his wife cast on him a piteous, haunting, never-to-be-forgotten look, and cried out—"It's no use! Let go I'm los', I'm los'. Oh, Jack, Jack, if thou cud o'ny hev saved me. Bur it's no use. There was a wisp of straw under the bushel, an' through that I've missed my on'y chance, an' I'm los'."

And the cry of his wife echoed through the empty barn like the wail of a lost soul. And immediately there came a darkness that could almost be felt, and Jack Clucas was left alone.

“Riding the Devil.”

BY BILL BILLY.

My great grandfather had been in his youth rather a wild sort of a fellow. Possessing a splendid physique, and a strong constitution, he became the ringleader in all sorts of mischief; and, to tell the truth, a complete nuisance in the parish.

Wherever there was dancing, drinking, or the possibility of fighting to be had, he was generally first to arrive and last to leave.

At the age of 25, however, a complete change took place in his character.

One Sunday evening he had heard John Wesley preach near Peel: and while listening to the preacher he was convinced of the foolishness and sinfulness of the life he was leading, and there and then he determined to change his ways and by Divine help lead a better and more useful life.

For months his former companions teased and persecuted him, hoping to bring him again to his old way of living; but firm in his resolve to lead an honourable Christian life, he first gained the confidence, and finally the respect of the whole countryside. The spare time which he had formerly spent in the ale-house, he now devoted to study, and, being a fluent speaker, he was prevailed upon by the Peel Methodists to become a local preacher.

At the age of 30 he preached his first sermon.

He soon became quite at his ease in the pulpit, and his humour, originality, and the

descriptive style of his sermons soon made him popular as a preacher. What was more valuable (and still often rare) his life was in perfect harmony with his teachings.

As he advanced in years, his honesty in all his business dealings, combined with a cheerful and generous disposition, made him one of the most honoured and respected men in the west side of the Island.

I have frequently heard the old people who remembered him, describe him as a man "Mighty in the pulling down of the strongholds of Sin and Satan," and one who seemed determined to do all the harm possible to the kingdom of the devil.

His home was on the farm near Glenmaye, and he was accustomed to ride to his distant preaching appointments on an old favourite white mare called Jess. Both Jess and her master were a pleasant and a familiar sight as they jogged along contentedly together through the country lanes on Sunday evenings.

A glorious revival had broken out at Peel, and the old man had walked to the chapel on the Shore-road in the morning, after leaving orders with his manservant to bring Jess in the evening, so that he might ride home at night.

About ten o'clock he left his friends "Good night" and went to the stables where he usually put up when in town. Not wishing to disturb the ostler, he entered the stable in the dark, and seeing only one white horse in the stalls he mounted it, and started for home. The old man was in a happy frame of mind, and, as he rode along, he was delighted to think of the number of poor sinners whom he had been instrumental in saving from the clutches of the devil.

It was a lovely autumn night. All Nature seemed hushed to a quiet sleep. The new moon showed faintly at intervals, between the cumulus hills of cloud, lighting up their round-

ed summits with a soft peaceful radiance, and then would disappear and a dark slumb'rous shadow would creep over the hills and fields.

My great grandfather was rudely shaken out of his pleasant reverie, by his horse stumbling and almost throwing him. Supposing that she had stumbled during an interval of darkness, he spoke soothingly and caressed the animal, which appeared nervous and fidgetty.

As he was passing through Patrick, his notice was again attracted to the horse, which was behaving in an extraordinary manner. He was now passing a dangerous and precipitous part of the road, and the horse seemed determined to stumble and throw him, and it required all his skill as a horseman to retain his seat in the saddle.

Having passed this danger safely, the brute appeared anxious to crush him against a high stone wall on the other side of the road, and he was surprised at her resistance, as he tugged at the bridle in his endeavour to keep in the middle of the road.

After leaving the Creggans behind, the mare became unmanageable, and it was with the greatest difficulty he could keep his seat. He had never been accustomed to use a whip or spurs, but on this occasion he longed sincerely for one or the other.

The moon had again slipped behind a huge mountain of cloud, and with the darkness that followed its disappearance, a strange thrill passed through the horse. Stretching out her neck, she took the bit savagely between her teeth, and with a wild plunge made straight for the hedge on the right hand side of the road. Tearing through the bushes, she scrambled over and then went at a mad gallop straight for the cliffs by the sea. The wind sang and whistled by the old man's ears with the rapidity of their flight, but its tone seemed mournful and wailing.

Then came like a flash of light to his mind

the scripture story of the swine into which the devils had entered, and which rushed violently down a steep place, and perished in the waters below. The present seemed a parallel case, and he began to think that his old mare—usually so quiet—was also possessed with a devil. He believed however that no devil could injure him, while he trusted in God, so he cried out aloud “Lord help me.”!

The horse violently started, and he found himself thrown harmlessly on the soft damp grass. He rose to his feet, and watched its mad career. Straight for the cliffs it tore along, and as it disappeared over the edge, he heard a loud noise resembling distant thunder. Puzzled and bewildered, but thankful for his miraculous escape; he retraced his steps to the highroad and hurried home.

He at once called his manservant, and began to question him about his treatment of the mare. The fellow interrupted him and began to excuse himself, saying he had clean forgotten to bring the horse to town. “What!” cried the old man, “has the horse been in the stable all day? Then I must have been riding the Devil!”

Together they went out to the stable, and there was old Jess standing patiently, as she had stood all day long.

My great grandfather, to his dying day, was firmly convinced that his Sunday’s adventure was a scheme of the Devil’s to destroy his life, and so put a stop to his preaching. He felt almost flattered to think that he had done so much harm to the kingdom of evil that even the Prince of Darkness himself thought it necessary to personally waylay him, but ignominiously failed in his endeavour.

A Night with the Fairies.

BY BILL BILLY.

Did I avar tell ye about the fust time I went out to the herrins? No? Well I was ony a lump of a sthugga then, but I'll navar forget that night as long as I live.

Me Uncle Jem (battar known as Jem the Worrum) was skipper of an ould loggar they wor callin' the "Haste" to. She was a fine ould boat, too. I was oftin axin him when was he goin' to take me out forra night to the herrins. So one day he ses "Come down to the (a) langlish some everin after tay an' we'll come in with the yawl an' take ye with us."

We wor livin' aboura couple o' miles outside Peel, so one everin' I lef' home and went down to the town.

I did'n want to go to the boat at once, so I spent a quile with some Peel fallas I was acquaintit with. At las' one o' them sed "If yer goin' to the herrin's ye battar hurry up, or the boats 'll be gone an you lef'."

It was just beginnin' to get grey be the hedges when I gor down to the shore, an' behowl' ye, all the fleet was gone but one boat. I thinks to myself I'm done for ta-night, enyway, when jus' then I noticed a yawl comin' in to the beach.

I shoutit to the man in 'ar "Is that the 'Has'e's' yawl?" He didn't say if it was or it wasn't, but he sed "If ye want to go to the herrin's ye battar come with is, for we mus' be goin', an' we've waited long enough for ye already."

I thought to meself is not one o' the 'Has'e's' crew, burr I'll go with him before I'll be bet.

(a) Stone jetty.

So I jumped into the yawl, an' the man navar sculled or nawthin, but the yawl jus' went off arself right before the win' out to the big boat lyin' at anchor in the bay.

The mose lovely music I avar hard seemed to b' coming from the foc'sle.

Ye know I alwis was a lover of music o' eny kine. When I was on'y a lump I cud lie for hours an' hours on the brooghs be the say lissenin' to the sof' soureyin' of the waves with the rocks.

Our people used to say I was lazy, but they didn' understan' me. It was'n laziness eather, bur I cud lie be the hedge on a fine Spring day an' fall in a (*b*) jerrude; an' the ruslin' o' the laves an' the hummin' o' the bees seemed jus' lek fairy voices spaken to me, an', in the middle of a jerrude lek that, me father wud shout "Billy, ar thou avar goin' to get them priddas set?" An it wud be lek comin' from Hevin back to earth to me to go on with me work again.

Bur am gettin' away from me yarn. We came roun' be 'ar starn, an' I noticed 'ar name was the "Llananshie" (maenin' Queen o' the Fairies). We jumped on boord an' went straight to the foc'sle, an' I saw the crew in theer playin' music, an' singin' an' dancin'. They seemed all strangers to me except one, an' he didn' seem quite so merry as the res', an' whenever I turned me head suddenly his way I caught his eyes fixed on me.

I cudn' remember his name, though his face seemed familiar.

The men wor all very (*c*) gennal an' civil to me, but not in eny hurry to go to say; so at las' I ses "Won't ye be late gerrin' to the fishin' groun', for the win' is on'y light?" When I sed that they all gor up an' went on deck, an' wor soon busy heavin' up the anchor an' settin' sail.

No-one spoke to me, so I sat down on the gunnal to look round, an' I think I navar saw a lov'lier sight than that everin'.

(*b*) Reverie. (*c*) Genial.

The sun was jus' sinkin' in the westard, an' I almos' thought I was gerrin' a li'l glimpse through the gates of Paradise; I cudn' raelly describe the beauty of the sky, for I hevn' the words for it.

The sun looked like a big ball o' fire fallin' behind grate purple hills of clouds, an' all the peaks and ridges o' tham wor streaked an' lined with gol' an' crimson; an' then theer were deep dark shaddas tha' looked like caves, an' the delicatest shades of blue and orange; an' from the sun, right up to the boat, was a road all of gol', an' all dancin' an' sparklin' with the moshin of the waves.

The red rocks of Creg Malin, an' the brown walls of the ould Castle were lookin' warm in the light from the settin' sun; an' the ould town itself seemed more like a pictur' than a town of rael stone houses.

The sound o' the voices o' childer playin' on the beach, an' the sof' drowsy splash o' the waves came off on the quiet air jus' lek music.

When I looked round again we wor a good bit off the lan', an' I cud see the lights twinklin' in the shop winders, an' nearer us the gulls wor flyin' away, tired lek, for their nesses behind the hill.

The boat was rowlin' quite slow an' reg'lar' an' the sails wor fillin' out with that ruslin, sound ye'll hear of a fine everin' at say. I was feelin' in good spirits, an' kin' o' elevated lek'; tha seemed to be somethin' in the air differant till usual.

When the crew went down below to get supper they axed me, too, an' I went. Then the notion came to me suddenly that theer was somethin' wrong with these fallas.

I kind o' felt theer was somethin' strange, an' yet I cudn' tell whor it was.

They wor passin' the food to me when I caught the eye o' the man whose face seemed familiar, an' I cud see quite plain that he signed to me not to touch it.

I was feelin' hungry, an' the mate was very temptin', bur I thought to meself, No, I'll not touch it, an' I didn'. I bitended I was feelin' a

bit sick, an' wudn' dar' ate, an' I gor up to go on deck, bur I cudn' get. I knew wheer the slidin' door was well enough, but though I walked round an' round I cudn' get out till the res' had finished, an' then I went out with tham as aisy as cud be.

We wor be this time about eight or ten miles off the Islan', an' I cud on'y jus' make it out. The moon had rose, an' the tops o' the waves wor dancin' in the white moonlight, an' "The Llananshie" tossed the foam from her bows, all sparklin' with the (*d*) "fairy light."

It was a darlin' summer night. The air was cool an' sweet, an' now an' ag'in ye cud hear the puffins callin' to each other.

The stars above wor all twinklin' so friendly lek, that they seemed good company.

The whole say was all spreckled with the lights o' the boats lyin' to their "trains," or movin' quietly about lek big dark shaddas lookin' for a berth to shoot their nets.

I sat to one side be meself, an' overh'ard the crew talkin'. The falla tha' seemed to be the skipper was sayin' "We mus' give the luck to tham tha's believin' in us still, an' usin' the harb, an' the dust, an' the other charims."

Then he sed "Jem the Worrum is usin' the harb still, so we'll give him a good shot."

Another bright lookin' falla sed "I was out at midnight las' week, an' I saw a man o' the 'Victory's' goin' roun' sweepin' the dust o' the steps o' the lucky skippers' houses, an' puttin' it in a bag to sprinkle ou the nets. He deserves a good fishin', too."

"We'll give him twenty or thirty mease," ses the skipper, "but we mus' give the (*e*) govags to the third boat."

I felt as if I was dr'amin', when I h'ard the sweetest music I avar lissen'd to.

Three of the crew wor playin' on a kind o' fife, an' the res' wor singin'. It seemed to draw even the say birds to liss'n, for they came flockin' after us be the thousan'—gulls, shags, gannets, an' puffins. But the strange thing

(*d*) Phosphorescence. (*e*) Dog fish.

was they didn' scream as usual; an' the on'y sound h'ard was their splash as they dived after the herrin'.

I went to the side an' looked over, an' saw a wonderful thing. The whole say seemed to be alive with herrin'. There mus' hev been millions o' tham, an' they seemed to be strugglin' to get near the boat, as if wantin' to be close to the music.

We hed now reached the fishin' fleet, an' we passed almos' alongside a loggar lyin' to 'ar train. 'Ar foremast was lowered, an' the boat rose an' fell on the swell, so calm an' sleepy lek, that she seemed like a big tired bird takin' 'is res'.

I cud see the man on the "look out" walkin' about, and hear him singin' to himself quite sof' an' aisy, so as not to disturb the sleepers.

He did not appear to see us, though we came down for them, right over their nets, with the herrin' follorin', of course. As we passed astarn I looked at the name, an' it was the "Haste." I next looked close at the man, an' it was me Uncle Jem. I shoutit to him, an', though he turned his head our way, he navar made a sign he saw us, but went on singin' again to himself.

We passed the "Victory" next, an' then several others, an' at las' I noticed the fish wor gettin' sceerce, as if mos' o' them had been caught in the nets of the boats we had passed.

Then, suddenly the music changed, an' the crew began to play something harsher an' wilder an' more stirrin'. Then I noticed a different kind o' fish chasin' us. They wor mos'ly govags, hakes, an' (*f*) perkin-begs.

As we went over the "trains" o' the unlucky boats the hakes and govags tore the nets, an' the perkins rowled themselves in tham an' done lots of damage.

Then, jus' as the darkness began to clear away, an' a lil streak of light begun to show itself in the east, the boat's head was turned for the lan', an' as we neared the rocks the

(*f*) Little porpoises.

gulls wor beginning to cry an' start out to meet the fishin' fleet.

The harbour was quiet, an' not a sowl was stirrin' on the quay. As we came alongside I felt glad to get back, an' was jus' goin' to jump on the stone steps when the skipper sed "Thou batter stop with us for one o' the crew, we're bad wantin' a young man." The res' o' them stood round me, an' at the back I saw the falla thar I seemed to know. He gave me a sign to jump ashore, an', scarcely knowin' why, I did so an' ran up the steps.

When I gor up to the top I looked roun', an' the boat was gone.

I felt stiff an' cauld an' half frightened, an' climbed up on the lighthouse balcony, an' looked over the bay an' out to say, but there wasn' a boat in sight.

I cudn tell what to make of it.

Two or three hours later the fishin' boats came in from say, an' the boats with the big shots wor the ones thar I seemed to know wud hev them. Then I went to the othar boats expectin' to find govags, an' theer they wor, an' the men mendin' their nets an' jawin', poor fallas.

I went down to the "Haste" an' towl me uncle the whole story. He sed "I thought I h'ard yar voice about two o'clock this mornin', bur I navar saw nawthin' near us."

He warn'd me not to say a word to anybody abour it, for he sed "People hev been tuk at the fairies for good, lek Juan Jem was afore now. He lef' home one everin' an' was navar seen again."

Then I remembered the fairy face that seemed familiar—

"It was the face of Juan Jem."

Gran'fathar's Story.

Another story, childhar? Aw, well now, I declar,
I'm clane done urriv stories—
Jus' as thy gran'fathar.
Gough bless ye, boughs, th' tales
That man hev towl to me;
Ye'd navar think the fairies an' buggans that he
hev seen!
A story, darlins? So I will—
A true one, too, for all.

Bur'dhraw yar cheers arown th' fire
An' lat th' curtain fall.
Theer! Now we're snug an' cosy,
An' th' fire is burnin' bright.
I'll tal ye one thing, mother,
I's a rael good Chris'mas night!
I's lek i's fifty years an' more
Th' tale I'm goan to tell—
One snowy Chris'mas everin,
To thy gran'fathar befell.
Aw, Kiree gel, in them days
Thar warn't a smartar goan—
Thy gran'fathar could howl his own
At fightan or at ploughan.
It wass jus' beyan St. Thrinian's—
Th' owl chaval theer; ye know
Wheer th' buggans howl high ravals,
An' th' Tailor went to sew.
A morthal plucky chap, for all,
Tha lil Snip mus' hev been.
Ye mind th' terble thing he saw?
'Twas jus' th' same I seen!
I was whisalan Owl Mylecharaine,
An' thryin' not to see
Th' haunted lookin' ruins,
Burra thinkan of th' spree
An' my swateheart, Kathie Killey,
An' th' dancin in th' barn,
An' I vowed benaith th' mistleto'
"This night my fate I'll larn!"

As I drew near to St. Thrinian's,
Th' win' began to rise,
Th' snow fell down lek anythin',
An' th' air wass full o' sighs.
The big threes shuk and shivared,
An' lashed theer arms arown—
I knew at once, then, childhar,

I wass on holy groun'.
 Jus' then, inside th' chaval
 I sees a flickerin' light
 Shine through th' crumblan winda,
 An' then it bus' out bright.

A morthal creepy feelin'
 Went tearin' up me back ;
 Bu', as I sed, them times I warn an aisly sceered
 chap.
 I crooled up to th' winda,
 Me heart goan pirra pat—
 Th' sight I saw then, childhar,
 Made me hair reise in me hat !
 Theer, sittin' by a threminjus hole
 In th' middle of th' floor,
 Through which th' flames an' smook shot up,
 Owl Harry ! Himself for sure !
 He wass saited on a bouldhar,
 Howlan a heavy book ;
 An' afthar he had writ a bit,
 He laafed tae th' owl walls shook.
 His imps war gamblan roun him,
 An' laipin through th' fire,
 A mouthan an' a grinnan—
 Aw ! th' sight was grim, thallure.

Sez he : " Is fairly well ye've done, me dears,
 An' though tha peebles is few
 That hev lef' our society,
 New members—they hev grew.
 But lis'an, an' I'll tell ye
 A few that need yar keer,
 An, p'rhaps, theer names 'il figger fine
 Upon my lis' nex' year !
 Theer's Thomas Caysor Cubbon,
 He's thryan to get clear—
 An' very dim his name hes got in my big volume
 here.
 Theer's——"
 Jus' then Owl Harry saw me,
 An', wis a feerful roar,
 All vanished in th' smook an' flames,
 An' I knew nothan more !

When I waked 'twas 'arly mornin',
 Th' grey was in th' sky ;
 An' all arown, so beautiful, th' silent snow did
 lie.
 I thought I mus' a been dhramin',
 Bur when I looked—for shure,
 Theer, in th' lil owl chaval,
 Th' snow wass melted off th' floor !

The Supernatural in the South of the Island.

Of the many hamlets which fringe the sea-board of the Isle of Man, few can present to the enquirer into Folklore a wider field for research than the village of Derbyhaven, which nestles in the bay, by St. Michael's Island, in much the same condition as it was half a century ago. True, the little place is on the eve of greater enlightenment.

There is at the present time being pressed forward a scheme for street lamps, which are generally supposed to be hostile to the presence of fairies, if not ghosts, and a short time ago a new mission room was erected. But not even such luminous rays have availed to dispel from the minds of the natives those clouds of superstition which seem inherent to the Celtic nature. Thus, not content to relate those stories of haunted lane and bewitched house which have been handed down from father to son, from mother to daughter, and of which we shall presently treat at greater length, the present generation have found for themselves new sprites, new ghosts, to haunt the approaches to Derbyhaven.

It may be remembered by the reader that during the past summer two fatal accidents by drowning occurred inside the Derbyhaven breakwater. It is with the latter of these two cases that we have to deal.

The unfortunate man was found drowned one morning, while there were no circumstances to throw light on the manner of his getting into the water. He was a native of Ireland,

and one of the "hands" of a small schooner that had come into the bay for safety from the storms. The man was in his lifetime a Roman Catholic, and his corpse was duly buried, after an inquest, with the usual ceremonial of that church.

But it was alleged, and is now the common story, that he was buried *with his boots on*. According to Manx tradition, this usually tends to "walking," and accordingly the "ghost" of the deceased is to be seen at night treading the lonely road from Derbyhaven to the graveyard, along which the body passed during the funeral.

But the story does not end here. The deceased is said to have been survived by his mother, who was passionately devoted to her son. Though she is still alive, the "longing" for her son is so strong on her soul that her spirit has found out the place of his death, and now a woman clad in a dark garb of blue or black is to be seen in the garden round the Roman Catholic Chapel on the front green. The apparition has already been seen by several people—chiefly women—who will not now dare to pass the haunted spot after dark.

But it is not only in the dark that the supernatural beings exercise their influence. On the main road between Castletown and Ballasalla there is a garden which now belongs to Mr G. H. Quayle, and is familiarly known as "Quayle's Folly." Anybody passing alongside the garden wall at the hour of noon is—or should be—filled with an eerie sensation that someone invisible is walking beside him.

There is a further well-authenticated story with regard to a big barn near the same place. About twenty years ago a Mr Sainsbury was returning from a mission room in the country, where he had been preaching, in company with a friend. As they were passing this barn, they heard the sounds of most melodious music wafted on the breeze, in the midst of which there came a burst of æthereal song, surpassing all human power. Mr Sainsbury's companion was a headstrong young man, and, in spite of the entreaties of his friend, persisted in forcing

his way inside to see from whence this music came. The other, certain that it was the fairies, and feeling assured that idle curiosity would be punished, walked steadily on; but after having gone some way, and realising that there was no sign of his friend re-appearing, he turned back and shouted. On receiving no response to his cries, he hastened on and told the tidings to the villagers, and forthwith a search was instituted. On reaching the building the mysterious music was no longer heard, and the place was entered. But though it and the neighbouring fields were thoroughly searched, that man has never been seen or heard of to this day.

In addition to these purely local spooks, the famous "Molug Vaar," which left Peel many centuries ago, has been seen to stalk round Hango, and sometimes on moonlight nights to cross the sands. Mr Hamilton, I believe, has publicly declared that he has seen the animal crossing the sea-shore. The apparition takes the form of a dog, and is of the size of a young calf, but is headless—a gruesome sight indeed. The spectre is more usually seen by the canine race, and it is a fact that quite recently a collie dog, while nearing Castletown on his way from Derbyhaven, went towards an open gate by Mr Karran's farm, which is at the foot of Hango. Suddenly it started back and tore off to its mistress with its tail between its legs and generally exhibiting signs of the greatest terror, cowering close up to the lady until she went to look for the cause of the fright. But she was unable to see or hear anything, though the dog could not be induced to go to the place again.

So far we have treated of ghosts of the road (if so they may be styled) but the following is an instance of a haunted field in this neighbourhood. There is a large field by Ronaldsway in which there is a big pool of water. A young man was returning home to Ballasalla, but instead of going round by the road, he thought that he would take a short cut across the country. His way led him through this field, which had the reputation of being haunted.

Although the moon was full, the youth, once he got into the field, could not get out again. Round and round he tramped, but he could not find the exit. Then he tried to clamber over the wall, but his efforts were mysteriously repulsed until, about two hours later, he managed to escape over the wall at about the same spot as he had entered, and he did not get home till about twelve at night when he was quite fagged out, having had to go the long way round by the road after all. The mischievous spirits in this case are believed to be "faries."

The superficial and conceited reader will, of course, say at this juncture, "Hum! Drink! of course." But he will be quite mistaken, for there is not a public house within a couple of miles of the spot, and the incident took place before the Fort Island Hotel had been built. Moreover, similar occurrences has happened more than once in the same field. In the ancient Metroplis itself the race of ghosts are on the decline. Of course, according to tradition, the Castle is haunted. A dark figure, clad in mediaeval garb, tramps the now deserted corridors from time to time and on the stroke of midnight comes forth on to the bastions. But now that the Castle is shut up by night, the ghost feeling the insult has withdrawn to its own secret haunts, and it is now many years since it has been seen or heard of.

A similar fate has met the once famous and still historical spirit at St. Michael's Island. The story may be summarised as follows:—In the days when pirates and smugglers thronged, some treasure was secreted in St. Michael's Island, and was vowed to the church. Later on, by a breach of faith, a band of pirates learnt the whereabouts of the treasure, but were unable to loot it without murdering the priest who guarded it. But the buccaneers were not to be turned from their purpose by the workings of conscience, and the priest fell a victim to their hungry blades. However, in dying he cursed his murderers, yet nothing daunted, the pirates transferred the loot to their vessel; but the curse was not left unfulfilled. Hardly had

they loosed anchor when the wind came on, and a hurricane arose which forced the ill-fated ship on to the very rocks from which the treasure had been stolen, and all hands were lost. From that time forward, at midnight, anybody standing in that chapel, now in ruins, would hear a jingle of money and dying moans.

Balladoole and Ballakeigan, the property of Mr Steevenson, being a couple of the oldest houses about the neighbourhood, have also the reputation of being haunted; the former by a lady in white, the latter by a couple of ladies dressed in black. These do not always make themselves known by actual visionary manifestations, but sometimes people who pass the gates of the avenues leading to either house are seized with panic and compelled to run as if the arch fiend himself were behind them; and this, even though the victim's mind was concentrated on far different topics than ghosts.

Now all these instances tend to prove that there does exist a tendency to what is called superstition in the Manx mind, but the peculiar feature of their belief consists in its variety. For them the phantom need not be a transparent white spectre, visionary and unreal. Women in white, women in blue, women in black, dogs like calves, men in fishing attire, hunting as it were both singly and in couples, all come under the category of ghosts. Stranger still is their credulity in fairies. Even though some do not believe in their existence now, very few native islanders have the face to say that they never existed at all. It is Shakespeare's "Pack" come to life again.

A Prospector's Story.

[BY A SOUTH AFRICAN MANXMAN.]

[Many Manxmen now in Africa will recognise in "Stager" a well-known Laxey man. The story is true in detail.]

When Mashonaland made its debut to civilization some nine years ago, I joined a party of prospectors then going up for the purpose of exploring its gold resources. We purchased a bullock-waggon, stocked it with six months' provisions, and started from Johannesburg with showers of blessings and best wishes from a host of friends who gathered to bid us good-bye. We were indeed a medley crowd of mixed humanity, such as can only be got together in a cosmopolitan town like Johannesburg.

The journey through the northern part of the Transvaal was dull and uninteresting, save for a camp-fire story full of blood-curdling incidents related by one of the party whom we christened "Stager"—a man who, according to his own telling, had been through every country in the world. This being my first adventure, I often helped him to erect air castles. We appointed him geologist to the company, a position he filled, some said with credit and others discredit to himself. Bring him any kind of stone, and his vocabulary never failed him to give its origin, nature, and composition.

The fifth week out brought us to the banks of a large rivulet. The sun was fast hiding behind the distant range of hills. We outspanned for the evening, and were preparing our food. Jokes were passing freely, when a Kaffir boy came rushing into camp. Shrieking

as only a frightened Kaffir can, he fell prostrate at our feet, and gasped as we thought his last breath, "A lion, Baas, a lion!"

In a moment all was confusion, but above the din and noise we could distinctly hear the voice of Stager shouting, "Shoulder arms, the enemy is on us!" We never credited him with any pluck; but he demonstrated beyond doubt his gameness by leading the party into the thick bush. We had not proceeded far when the deafening roar of a hungered beast burst like thunder close by, and filled every man with Nature's first law.

The alacrity shown on this occasion by some of the old stiffs would have done credit to a professional steeple-jack. Those of us who had got into safety could not but admire the magnificent creature as it bounded along. As he drew closer, he arched his shaggy neck and charged straight for those left on the ground.

Bang! bang! Still on he came, slightly wounded, but with such an air of noble defiance and determination that none save Stager would take further chances. Resting his rifle on the limb of a tree, cool and collected, he aimed as though it was a springbuck coming for him, and with the report the king of beasts staggered, reeled round, uttered a deep groan, and fell dead at his feet. From that time on we dubbed Stager a hero; and never once did he refer to the event.

Some two or three weeks after this, we came to an alluvial diggings known then as "Laxman's Rush." The huts were still standing, but the place was dead still and desolate. On the news of the wonderful richness of Mashonaland reaching the diggers they rushed thither, leaving all manner of tools behind. Rummaging through the camp we came across one occupied by a fever-stricken digger, who was too weak to accompany the rest of the party.

"Poor fellow," I heard Stager say. "He is in the last stage of typhoid. Boys, we cannot leave him, and he is too weak to bring along. We must extend to him the hand of common humanity."

One thought only lived within us, reach Elderado! under any circumstances. If his pals in travel deserted him, we could not be expected to delay our journey on his account. The tide of impetuosity was already flooding into our gold-fevered brains—hence our inhuman arguments.

"Cease further discussion, boys," said Stager, "I'll stay and see the boy through"—a relief to many.

I often wondered how he got along with his dying charge. Recently, when in Cape Town, I met him strolling along the shore. My first inquiry was for the deserted digger. "Sit down," he said, "I'll tell you all particulars. The night after you fellows left, he grew worse, at times delirious. Calling me to his bedside, he said : 'Stranger, what a sacrifice you have made in my behalf ; no telling what richness you might have dropped on to had you gone on with your party. I admire the noble spirit of true manliness that actuated you to stay behind and do your best for me. You won't lose by your unselfish action. I cannot possibly live another day, but when I'm gone, old man, you will find beneath this stretcher two tins of gold. Dig them out, they are for you. Just one last request. Go to Cape Town and inform my sister of my death. Tell her I die full of regret for having left home under the circumstances.' The night wore on, and, God knows, I longed for dawn. He gradually grew worse, at times delirious, and as the rays of the morning sun penetrated our cabin he sank into a comatose, from which he never recovered. I kept moistening his parched lips and wiping the icy sweat from his withered brow until Death rung down the curtain announcing the last act in the drama of life. I fulfilled for him the last earthly office, piling up a heap of stones to mark the place in which he rests. Acting according to instructions, I dug beneath the stretcher and found the gold, and started right away for Cape Town. After weeks of enquiries and advertising, I was about to abandon the hope of ever finding the sister. Joining a friend one afternoon on a visit to Robben

Island (I may here state that this is the Leper's home, an Island some miles out to sea from Cape Town). Visiting one of the large asylums there for incurables, we were being shown through by a nurse whose eyes had that peculiar dreaminess—exactly similar to that of my dear friend. After she had escorted us through and we sat together in the stranger's reception room, I ventured to ask if she had a brother up country. Yes; you might have met him. His name was Richard Chambers. Poor Dick! Poor Dick! I often wondered what on earth had become of him, he never wrote after leaving home. 'Oh! my poor prodigal brother', she exclaimed. 'if I only could see his face again.' She sank back into the chair and wept aloud. The matron broke her the news. The following morning she came to see me, when I told her full particulars. She wept as only a true woman can under family bereavement. Our interview was painful and protracted. She promised to come again. On her next visit I laid on the table those two bags of gold. She refused, saying no one had more right than I to what she considered my due reward for such noble treatment of her brother. I begged and implored her to accept. She answered again and again 'I have sufficient.' We met often after that. Our acquaintance ripened into love, and that sweetest of creatures, the dear girl who had given her young life to those unfortunate incurables on Robben Island, brightens the home, cheers the life, and smooths the path of that old rough and ready prospector, whom you knew years ago as "Stager."

F. K.

Manx Folklore.

(Contributed by Mr Roeder, of Manchester.)

FAIRIES.

It was one time I was down at Trinity Fair,—it's above forty years ago,—with a cow, for me father. The weather was fine, uncommun, an' I was a bit late. I hed company up the Glione-Mooar for a peice, an' I warn' in no hurry lavin'; a bit o' sooryin', ya know man. Well, naver mind, but after that I was comin' alone an' as happy as a crickhad singin' away, an' when I got up above Chrammag a piece I could hear singin' ahead a me. What did I think but thar it was some of the Baaregarrow ones tha was goin' on before me, but I seen I was gettin' nearer, closer and closer, man, an' thar it was down in tha ghill it was, playin' an' singin' away like Billy O. I was a bit of a misishan meself in me day, so I thought ah would go a bit closer, but I minet to keep out o' sight, for I knew well enough it was *tha lil wans* tha would be down theer. Bless me, what gran' singin' they hed, an' there was one of the chunes at them took me taste extrordinary. I thought I had it right enough too, but bless ya theer war so many at them that I got mixed for all. Well, man, I waited an' waited to see if I would hear it again, tell at last I fell asleep lis'nin' to them. When I wakent it was a fine mornin' an' smook comin' up oura the houses. So down I goes to Chrammag, an' when they

seen me they war wonderin' in theer sences what I was dooin' so early. So I up an towl them all abourit. Aw, tha's nothin'! they said, for ya'll hear them about here (someplace), every night jus': but come in, come in, an' get a bit of somethin' to ate and take a look roun'. Give a sight on the neighbours, man, it's not often yer comin' our way, an' spend the day with us. Maybe ye'll heer them to-night again someplace. Tha's what I done; when the night came, some of the boys came piece of the way with me, for sure we h'ard them, so we would all go ta listen. Bless yar life, ya naver h'ard such gran' singin' an' musick in all yer born days. I was gettin' full of it meself, an' the boys sayin, *Lie cute, man*, to see how'l they get on. For sure, though, up goes me own chune again, an' when it came to the chorus I could'n keep quate no longer, theer was such a fine swing with ar, but joined in with a "rooding, reeding, rooding, tan da ran." Man, dear, tha was a hullibaloo. In one minute we were out o' sight, and we lied in as quate as mice. In a bit, though, they ar it again, an' jus' as the boys war goin' ta go in comes two'puffin' an' blowin', hosses an' all, an' theer was a hooroose in a jiffey ta see what was it. Aw, w'ar' done for, w'ar' done for, they sid, tha's a lot of English fellas wantin' to gera hoss tha'll go with steamm to the Island, an' theer goin' ta try to make an iron road for'im to go on by himself, an' some of the Dhoolish fellas is coaxing them on. Aw, tha's tha time tha rumpus started. Ya naver seen such capers, they said. Aw, well, well, says a lot a them, if tha's tha things theer goin', a do we'll clane for it. Aw, 'deed we will, aw, 'deed we will, they shouted, an' many a thel-than theer childhar'll see for it to theer sorra; but let them, let them. Aw, ye'll get lave, as like, they'l have it for all. Worse and worse the hullibalooo was gettin', so we thought it was time ta clane for it, for ya could see the friggan that was gettin' on them; so I leff the boys good-night, an' started for home. I managed ta keep tha chorus though, but thry as I like I could'n get into the run o' tha chune, but I was too frikened to chance it again.

CHARM.

A few weeks ago a little boy of mine was kept home with sore throat and was attended by the doctor.

One day an elderly neighbour woman came in to see him and asked for the covering on his neck to be removed, when she began joining her hands under his chin and drawing them up on each side of his face. This she repeated *nine times*, saying something inaudibly. I came in as this was a-doing, took a seat, and said nothing. When she had done, she turned to me and said: I suppose you don't believe in that, but there's no harm in it anyway; it's not like butcheragh. Ya don't believe in that either, as like, but I'll tell what I seen for myself. We had two pigs one time, an' they war thrivin' uncommun. an' people war sayin' "What fine sthuggas of pigs ya've got! there's fine rahmus at ya for them too." There was one far finer than th'other from the fus', and jus' as they war ready for the butcher, the big fella began to fail an' fail, an' at last he could'n get oura the mucklagh for his mate, an' then people war sayin' "Wha's doin' on the big pig at ya?" "Aw, we don't know," we war sayin'. Somebody said, "Ma'vee ther's *an evel eye purr on him*, and then people said, "It's butched; the thing is right enough; but my fella woulden listen to it. One night I took the lanthren an' a brush, an' went an' *gathered the dust of the four roads*, like people used to do, an' away to the mucklagh with me, an' *shook it over the two o' them*, then came me wase. "Where war ye," he said to me, "with the lanthren?" "Only over puttin' a sight on the pigs," I said, "an' thee'r out in the yard gruntin' away." "Dramin' ya ar, gel," he said, "an' me busy fixin' a bir a meat for them." "Come, lah," I said, "an' houl' the lanthren for me, an' ya'l see for yerself." An' the pigs was all right after. *There's no bad in a charm though, but butcheragh is a bad thing.*"

The Black Dog of Colby Glen.

BY BILLY PHERIC.

When a boy, nothing gave me more pleasure than to visit old Tom Juan Dick and hear him relate some of his stories of the Bugganes. Tom was a typical Manxman of his period; was a good-humoured, honest-hearted creature, and was considered by his neighbours to be "the best man for a good turn" in Ballakilpheric—that being the village in which he lived. It was therefore a pleasure to visit "Ould Tom" at his little thatch cottage, where he lived all alone in single blessedness—except for the company of his old faithful dog "Rover."

It was one cold winter's night, the wind howling and whistling down the chimney of Tom's cottage, that I sat on a low stool before the bright and cheerful-looking turf fire, listening with all eagerness as he told eloquently and positively the following story.

"Bugganes is nor as common now as they weer when I was a young falla' (he began); an a good job it is too mavec, for the young fellas now can thravel afther the gels without anything molestin' them. Bur it was very different when I was young. I can well remember, Billy bogh, one nite that Jemmy Dick gor agate wantin' me to go over with him to Ballayelse to purra site on the gels. At fuss I wasn' very willin' to go. I was naver much ov a hand at that job. Bur he kep'

coaxin' me so much thar at las' I agreed to go. It wasn' long tel we weer makin' thracks through the "Big Fiel's" by Colby Mill. Well, man, we got to the road, an' we went along right enough tel we got to the glen. Jemmy was plannin how we wud get to talk to the gels without owl Ballayelse knowin'. He was a terbil madman, was the Ballayelse, when fallas came about the house at nights after the gels. All ov a sudden, lek, there was a big black dog ran pas' us. There was sumthin' mortal queer lookin' about him. We were a bit scarr'd, as the sayin' is. Thinkin we wud see no more ov him, we soon gor over it. We gor agate yarnin' about the gels an' other things tell we got to the glen gate. But, bless thee sowl, man, we heerd an' seen sumthin' there that made the hair stan' on our heads. Down in the glen we heerd a noise louder than the heaviest thunder. The black dog stood afore us with his eyes shinin' lek fire. Jemmy shouted an' gripped houl o' me. Afore we had time to move the dog went lek a shadder, lavin us breathless an' frekened urrov our wits. However, we gor a bit o' courage, an' started on our journey once more. Once pas' the glen we were all right. When we gor to Kitty Tommy Hal's we thought it was time for a sup o' jough—for Kitty kep' a tavern. But Kitty was gone to bed, it bein' then close on midnight. Howaver, we managed to ger her roused up, an' it wasn' long afore we had a couple o' pints lowered, an' with fresh courage set off for Ballayelse.

But luck was agin us that night, for we hed to go from there jus' as fas' as we came.

Jemmy had climbed up to the gels' bedroom winder an' was tappin' his fingers on the pane when a dog inside commenced growlin' terbil. Thinkin' thar it was the big dog we had seen afore, Jemmy let go his grips an' fell down among a lor o' milk cans.

This wakened Ould Ballayelse, an' afore we had time to think, he had his head out through a winder, an' was threatenin' to shoot us if we wudn' make ourselves sceerce.

Now, Ould Ballayelse was no fell a to play with, as the sayin' is, an' we knew that the bes' for us to do was to ger away as soon as our legs cud carry us, though we thought terble hard of goin' without seein' the gels, an' mavee missin' a good supper. That wus nor all, if we went afore daylight we were mighty ap' to come foul ov the Black Dog in Colby Glen.

But go we mus' for by this time Ould Ballayelse, half dressed, had opened the door, an' was jawin' out o' massey, an' declarin' that he wud give the rapscallions lead. We ran for our lives. Afore we had time to look back we were once more rattlin' at Kitty Tommy Hal's door. Kitty was terble slow to ger up this time, but we war detarminded to have another peint afore facin' the glen, an' we kep' weltin at the door til Kitty—for feer ov it geddin' broke—gor up an' ler us in. We had another sup o' jough, an' then, feelin' a bit plucky lek, made a start for home.

It was a brave sorrov a nite, the sky was clear an' starry, but no moonlight. Jemmy thought it was light enough to cross the river by the plank at the top o' the glen, near Ballachrink, an', by goin' that way, give the "slip" to the Bugganes.

But in this we weer mistaken. We gor over the river, an' into the field. All at once it gor as dark as if we weer in a mine hole. We knew we cudn' make our way, so we stud there houlin' on each other, an' tremblin' with fear and cowl for very near half-an-hour. Sumthin' toul us we had batthar pray. Neither ov us cud do much at that job. However, Jemmy managed to say a few "good words," an' the nex' thing we knew was the darkness all gone. We cud see it, lek a cloud, goin' down the glen, til it went out o' sight. Then we heard growlin' an' yelpin' that was fit enough to waken everybody in the parish.

That was the las' we seen or heerd ov the Black Dog. It wasn' long til we were home an' thryan to gerra few hours sleep."

When Tom had finished his story I found that it was late. Although I had only about a few minutes' walk in order to get home, I longed to be there without going. However, I said "Evoi" to Ould Tom, and started. I did not dare to look around, for fear of seeing the "Black Dog of Colby Glen."



A Blue-Faced Ghost.

BY GAELK.

Quite a crowd of us had assembled one night in the smiddy; the principal yarning place of the country districts. The subject under discussion was ghosts.

"Did thou aver see a a ghos', Matty Creer?" asked Neddy Cojeen, the blacksmith, of a sturdy looking farmer.

"Aw no, Neddy bogh," answered Matty, "I can't say that I have, bur I h'ard that Philly the Faaishnagh say that he saw one wis a blue face, down near the Fairy Bridge, arly one mornan' las' autum'."

"Tell us aborrit, Matty," chimed in a chorus of voices.

"Well, bhoys," said Matty, "I hevn't got lave to tell it, for I promised Philly the Faaishnagh not to mention it to anybody; but here comes Philly himself (as Philly's form appeared in the doorway), perhaps he'll relate it to yer."

"Good averan' bhoys," said Philly. "An' wha's the cooish that's interastan' yer so much this ayerin'?"

"We war havan' a houl-on about ghos's. Philly!" said Matty, "an' I war for tellan' them that thou saw one las' autum'."

"So I did," answered Philly meditatively. "Yer see, bhoys, the rason I navar towl yer aborrit it afoor, is becos' young Gawne, who is sarvan' his time for a mason wis Bob Corlett, goes over that bridge avery mornan' to work. Yer know he's inclined to be a bit narvous, an' thought if he got to hear aborrit, he might be frackan'd an' be too sceered to go to work."

"That war considerate of thee, Philly," said Neddy Cojeen, "but thou batther tell us all aborrit now."

"Well, bhoys, theer is not much to tell," said Philly. "'Arly one mornan' las' autum' I war out after musharooms in Fayle's glen field, near the Fairy Bridge; when I saw a figger drest in white, wis a blue face, coman' down the lil road from the Lhergy. Aw bhoys, oh, bhoys, bor I war that frackan'd, I very near fell owra me clo's. I thought it wor the owl falla' himself, for sure. Yer cudn' hev seen my heels for smook gettan' up that field. However, I went back about haaf-a-hour afterwards wis Moore's two man-sarvants, but the ghost had disappeared. The most remarkable thing aborrit, bhoys, war that avery now an' then it wud stop an' clap i's han's upon i's knees, from which white puffs of smook arose; at the same chantan' wis a husky voice, a sound which went somethan' lek this, 'Da dilly da da dah.'"

A loud laugh from Huan the Ji'ner greeted Philly at the conclusion of his narrative.

"Well, Huan Kelly, wharra thou laafan' at," asked Philly, rather angrily.

"I am laafan' at thee, Philly," answered Huan, "bean' frackened of such a harmless ghost as Billy the Barsoonagh."

"Billy the Barsoonagh," all of us ejaculated.

"Yes," answered Huan, "Billy the Barsoonagh, or Billy the Taffy, or any other name yer lek to call him. I say it war him, for I saw the blue bean' put on his face. You remember bhoys," Huan continued (seeing an incredulous look on our faces, as though seeking askance for more news), "a crowd of us war up at Faragher's Mhelliah las' year; well, about haaf-pas' eleven that night, Bill Billy Beg came up to me an' ses, 'Huan do yer know that Fayle the Lhergy is havan' his Mhelliah to-night, too; what do yer say if we go up?' 'I'm agreeable, Bill,' ses I, "bur I don't think theer will be many up.' Anyhow three or four of us decided to go; when we gorrup we found that owl Fayle an' the family had gone to bed, laving theer man-servant, Jim Cannell, to act

as hoas'. The only gaast that war in when we arrived war Billy the Bardoonagh, an' that worthy had been suppan' not wisely, but foolishly. Bles' me bhoys, how gennal Billy war that night; recitan' po'try by the yard, an' havan' a drink at the end of avery verse. Theer war any amount of jough goan', an' spirits *dy lhiooar*, in fact, it might be sed that 'strong drink war ragan'. Things war beginnan' to ger a bit lively, when Jim Cannell proposed we shud have a step dance. 'But whar'll thou do for musick?' I axed. 'Oh, Billy, theer will quissel us a tune,' ses Jim. 'Alri', hic,' ses Billy (who had his back up agains' the wall to keep himself from fallan'), 'here goes;' an' he started to quissel a tune, clappan' his han's on his knees to keep time. Some of the falla's now had started step dancan', an' when the musick war gettan' a bit low, which war a sign that Billy's quissel war gettan' dry, they wud shout out, 'More jough for Billy.' Then Billy, when he wud get a fresh doze of the bavarage that cheers, but gives a falla a terbil headache next mornan', wuld start quisslan' again, as though he had gor a fresh lace of his life. Quisslan' soon proved to be too exhaustan' for he fell to chantan' a tune somethan' lek Philly towl yer of, till at las' he slid from agains' the wall on to the flure in a kind of faint. A couple of us lifted him up on a sittan' position on the flure. Jim Cannell sed he would fetch him to; he went out an' returned wis a canful of water, which he dashed over Billy's head. 'Hough, hough,' spluttered Billy, 'I'm drown't, I'm drown't.' 'I thought that wud fetch him to,' sed Jim, puttan' one han' on the mantelpiece to steady himself. By accident or otherwise, his fingers came in contact wis a packet of this blue that wimmen use for washan'; pickan' it up, Jim, for a lark, stooped down an' painted Billy's face wis it. Three or four of us then carried Billy out in the barn, an' made him a good bed in the hay. Two or three days after that I met Billy coman' along the road dres't in his Sunday clo's. 'Hallo, Billy,' I ses to him, 'how did ye get on up at Fayle's

the other night after we left yer?" "Aw, bad, bad, terbil bad," ses Billy. "I war tryan' to find me way owra the barn, an' war gropan' about for the door; when all of a suddan I fell through a trap door on to a butt of lime, which Fayle kep' in one of the houses below. Of course me clo's war burnt to pieces, but bles' me, man, the awful thirst I hed the next day, just lek if I hed swallowed a mouthful o' lime."

"I suppose," concluded Huan, "that when Billy war goan' home, he must hev imagined that he war still supplian' the musick; an' the rason Philly didn't meet him when he went back war very simple, for doesn't Billy live on'y two fields away from the Fairy Bridge. So I cudn't help laafan' at thee Philly—wheer is he—wheer is Philly?"

But Philly had quietly slipped away.

The Fairies.

On the north side of Laxey there used to live a man of quiet and retiring habits, and I have many times listened eagerly to him tell how the fairies used to meet him at Thallo-hog Gate, which way he usually came from Laxey when the nights were dark. In coming that way, he had to cross less fields and to mount considerably fewer hedges in getting home. He got so familiar with meeting the fairies so often that he used to sit down and begin arguing with them. What the arguments were about he failed to inform me. But this I do remember well. On one occasion this man was seen walking about the fields with a stick. On being asked what was the matter, he said the fairies and himself had disagreed over a fish that he was bringing home (a skate); that they brought him to a well-known big "dub" (pond) close by Thallo-hog Gate, and threw him into the water; and that he had a terrible struggle to get home. And never after was that man known to come home that way.

Another notable man of great repute, who lived still nearer Clue Roy than the one above referred to, was one evening in winter crossing the same well-known field in which this big "dub" was situated. Suddenly a man of ordinary size, with bright buttons down the front of his coat and waistcoat, appeared by his side, and walked alongside him quite closely until the hedge was reached at the other end of the field. When attempting to mount the hedge, suddenly it became dark. He again tried to feel for the hedge, when he felt himself moving, and in a moment or two water appeared to be running by. But the sensation

of this moving became so pleasant that he apparently fell asleep. Suddenly he awoke in broad day light. He stood erect and looked around in complete astonishment. He found that he was standing on a big rock on the point of Clay Head, and underneath him a deep ravine. He next thought of his own home, and after getting from the rocks he retraced his way homeward, keeping his face all the time towards Glendrink. In the course of a few hours he walked into his own home, and related his memorable story to his own family. He then removed his clothing, for they were all thoroughly wet, retired to bed and slept unusually sound until noon the next day. G.



A Manx Revival Yarn.

[BY PURT-NY-HINSHAY.]

Some years ago—thirty years ago, or it maybe more—there were living in the city of Peel many people of remarkable originality. And perhaps the two most original Peelites of those days were an old lady commonly called Peggy Chriss, and a member of the opposite sex rejoicing in the appellation of Billie Thompson—no connection of the renowned Douglas auctioneer. Both Peggy and Billie had for a considerable period gained a livelihood by following the occupation of “cadger”—i.e., they took herring from Peel in spring-carts to Douglas and other parts of the Island for disposal by retail to householders and others. Peggy lived in a little house almost opposite to the Peel Primitive Methodist Chapel—or as it was called in every-day parlance “the Ranthers’ Chappal.” At that time what afterwards became known as the great Dilke revival was going on in Peel. There are yet living numbers of people who will remember the great wave of religious emotionalism which then swept over the whole Island. Revival services were of much more frequent occurrence than nowadays, and the winter months were in great measure devoted to excitement of that description. Now one of Billie Thompson’s peculiarities was that every time a revival set in Peel way he (Billie) must necessarily become converted, and while the services were on there was no more regular attendant at them than he. No man more “powerful in prayer” (as the phrase went) was to be found in the City of Peel, and altogether Billy was a very important personage and had a high old time while revivals were on. Peggy Chriss was a great crony of Billie’s, but she was a

very matter of fact old lady, and though religious in her own way, had no great sympathy with the methods adopted in connection with revivals. She, however, knew Billie's peculiarity, and it is to be feared took a somewhat malicious delight in stirring his dormant enthusiasm. For, alas that it has to be recorded, once the excitement of the service had passed, Billie was in the habit of falling from Grace. Often enough when a service was proceeding in the chapel across the way, Billie would drop into Peggie's cottage for a "smook" and a "cocish," and it was at such times that Peggie would play upon her fellow cadger's little weakness. The two well-seasoned and highly-coloured old clays would be puffing away the while the singing, praying, groaning, and "joyful noises" would be proceeding in the chapel, and would be borne on the evening air into Peggie's kitchen. Presently would the old lady remark,

"Iss a gran' work tha's goin' on across the road theer, man."

"Yes, wumman," Billie would briefly respond.

"Whar a shame, Billie, thou're not helpin' on in the good work."

"Yes, Peggie, yes, wumman, it is though."

"They're tellin' me that mos'ly all the oul reprobates in town is bein' converted, Billie, and here thou are outside of the fol'. Iss a shame, Billie, a shame it is."

"A shame it is, Peggie; a shame wumman." I believe thou're right, and I'll go in this night—right now I'll go, and give a kill of divoorcement to the devil."

Across the road then would Billie rush, get converted forthwith, and soon would his voice be heard loud in supplication. Whatever, though, might be the nature of Billie's prayer, he never failed to work artistically in with the couplet

With sorra for sin, let repentance begin,
And convarshun will surely draw nigh.

The Fairies' Victim.

[BY BILL BILLY.]

I'm oftin puttin' a sight on oul' Phil Juan Pherick, for he's good morthal for a cooish. The las' time I was in, our tawk turned on the fairies an' theer doin's, an' I'll tell yer a yarn that oul' Phil toul' me. He sed:—

"Tha's people tha's sayin' tha is all boghned about the fairies, but I know different, for I saw them an' hard them, an' was punished at them. I'll tell yer abour it, an' yer can plase yerself whithar yer'll belave it or not. The time I'm spakin' of, I was a young man stayin' at Ballacormortha as cowman. Ned Garratt was horseman there, an' a fine-lookin' young falla he was.

When the long, dark everin's wor' comin' on, Ned an' meself used to do a birra surreyin' in the reg'lar oul' Manx fashion — not lek the young fallas these days, stannin' in a doorway, an' the gels an' themselves gerrin' influensha — but goin' right in the house, an' sittin' by the fire, an' hevin' a lil' cooish with a bir o' comfort.

' Well, many a night we wor' late gettin' home, an' the big man himself an' the family would be gone to bed. They wor' kin'-hearted tho', an' they used to lave a birra something

for us to ate in the kitchen; sometimes errid be a basin of pinjean or solaghan, or maybe some cowl' priddas an' herrin', an' a drink o' buttermilk. Aw, yis, they wor' alwis' good for mate, wor' the Cormortha's. Well, this night I'm spakin' of, after the lil 'earthags' [odd jobs] wor' sided, we lef' the house, intendin' to hev a lil sight on the gels as usual.

It was a fine starry night, but theer was no moon, so we hed'n any trouble to find the road. We wor' jus' goin' along by the Lhown Chem, when we hard the soun' of a lor o' people comin'. 'Bless me! wha's all these ones doin' out at this time of the night,' I ses. I turned meself roun', and theer the road was full o' people comin'.

All the brooghs wor' spreckled with sparks; tbeer seemed to be thousands of lil fires, an' I cud see lil shaddas movin' about in front of them. The soun' of the voices of the ones comin' on the road cum' closer an' closer, an' soon they overtuk us. Then we got "jung" [squeezed] right into the hedge. We cud'n do nawthin' when they wor' passin' us, on'y keep quate. An', 'deed, we wor' too freckened to lif' our heds, but we could hear them tawkin' plain enuff. Some of them wor' larfin, an' others jawin', an' they wor' all tawkin' in Manx.

I cud pick urr'ov it thar all the fairies in the Islan' wor' hevin' a big meetin' that night in the Lhown Chem, an' them tha' passed us wor' the Northside ones.

I cud'n make out what they wor' after, for I was jung that much thar I was too freckened to get the skeet.

The on'y thing I can remember hearin' was a voice sayin' "Cred tha ghull, tha gethan, shivar?" [Where are you going to supper], an' the answer was, "Ballacormortha."

I lifted me hed to see who was tawkin' an' tuk notiss of a lil oul' man with "gammy" [crooked] legs, long arms, an' long grey whiskers. Thar' was a crowd follerin' him lek as if he hed charge of them. I didn' say

nawthin', bur I thort, — If that 'trouss' [worthless ones] are goin' to Ballacormortha, tha'll be queer ructions goin' on theer this very night.

After the crowd was gone pass, I stritened meself up and ses to Ned. "What d'ye think of that?"

"I'm thinkin' we battar be gettin' back to our beds," he ses. "We bev'n any business wanderin' out this night. I'm that sore I can hardly walk back," he ses. "We battar try an' cut across the fields before they'll notiss us, for if they'll think we're skeetin' [prying] on them, they'll plague us till we'il be no more good."

I navar want to hev such a walk again at all. I'm sure we walked roun' the big ten-acre field dozens of times before we gor urrov it; an' some way or other we tuk all the mucky places, an' walked in the sthrames. If theer was a gap in the hedge we wor' shoved pas' it, an' forced to "sthaager" [struggle] over the hedge through the briars and goss. When we come to a lil broo, we wor' rowlt down, an' then we eud hear lil voices larfin' and callin us "blebs" [fools].

We mus' ha' been hours gerrin' back to the farm, bur at long las' we come in sight of the house, an' yer may be sure we wor' surprised when we saw the kitchen windas all lit up, an' sparks and smook comin' up urra the chimbley.

"Tha's more of it, yis, tha's more of it; I wish I was safe in bed," ses Ned.

"Wha'll we do?" I ses. "We darn't stay in the fields, or we'll be tuk at them before daylight, an' if Cormortha himself 'll see us lek this, tha'll be a row, and a stop put on this scrapin' out late of a night."

"Les ger up to the winda' for the skeet," ses Ned. So we stept up aisy on our carranes, an' didn' make any noise, an' then hid behin' a big hibbin bush, an' whar a sight we seen!

The kitchen was crowded with the lil people. They hed the candles burnin', an' a big reeker of a fire blazin' on the "chollagh" [hearth-stone], and the big pot hangin' on the "slowrey" [chimney hook]. The oulest ones wor' sittin on stools in the chimbley, an' on the settle which they had drew up in front of the fire. They wor' burnin' rough fire, an' one oul' falla was puttin' under with feearn an' goss, while another was stannin' up an' houlin' a big stick in both hands stirrin' the pot for all his might.

Theer was a queer lil falla with long whiskers an' crooked legs sittin' atop of the dressar, playin' the fiddle. I knew him at once to be the same falla thar had passed us at the Lhown Chem.

The music he drew urra that oul' fiddle of Cormortha's was raaly uncommon; I navar expec' to hear the lek any more. Indade, I clane forgot I was stannin' outside in the coul'. It was'n any tune I avar hard afore. It seemed to put yer in min' of a quiet summer night in one of the Lhowns of the Islan'. Yer cud fancy the sky without a cloud, an' on'y the quiet stars seemed to be awake an' keepin' watch. Even the big strong hills wor' asleep, an' yer cud almos' hear the breathin' o' the flowers.

The birds an' bees wor' sleepin' like tired childer, an' yer wud think the river was hevin' a lil quate cooish with the stars, as if it hed'n gor' a chance in the day time, an' it was tellin' its sacrets now, when the grass an' birds an' flowers wor' sleepin'.

Mos' of the young ones, the stuggas an' lumps, wor' dancin' to the music. They wor' dressed smart, too; all in bright colours, not keeir an' grey an' brown lek us ones, even on a Sunday, but in nice soft shades o' blues an' yallas and reds. An' they cud dance, too. They seemed to feel the mnsic, an' they stept to it in a dreamy, glidin' sort of way.

Then the oul' fiddlar would change the tune, an' yer wud think it was raaly a coul' winter's

everin'. Yer wud hear the win' a long way off, comin' down the Lhown with a coul' raw surt of a sigh, an' it wud come closer an' closer, moanin, an' then the trees close by wud be seemin' to get freckened, an' shakin' their bare arms; the rain an' the hail wud come skutchin' agin the winda' the same as if they wor' tryin' to ger in urra the coul', black, lonely night. The rivar wud be hurryin' ovar the stones to get to the say for company. Then the win' wud die away in the distance, till yer cud jus' hear it up on the hills howlin' like the "Dhonney Oie" [night man].

The dancers wor' dancin' in a restless surt o' way, an' I was shiverin' outside with me feet coul' and me teeth chatterin', an' wishin' I was safe in me warm bed, or even in the kitchen, tho' I wud'n dar' go in.

Over close to the winda', sated on the forrum at the table, wor' a lot of them hevin' their supper. My gough, whar a strike they wor' hevin'! Theer was a big candle in the middle of the table, an' on each side of it theer was a big plate of bruised priddas, with a hole in the middle as big as yer fist full of melted butter. They wor' all helpin' themselves, an' dippin' their spoons in the butter.

Some of them hed priddas and herrin'. The priddas wor' all haped in a lil but on the table (for plates warnt so common used them times). The priddas' o' coarse, wor' boiled in their jackads, an' they all et the herrin' with their fingers, an' then wiped them in a cloth which they passed from one to another.

Some of them wor' atin' pinjane, an' a few oul' ones wor' sittin' with a basin of brosh or solaghan on their knees atin' with a horn spoon. Then theer was water an' milk to drink, an' plenty o' soda cake and barley bread, an' indade they hed a reg'lar boliface. They warn' long clanin' their plates and empyin' the basins, bur I was tuk aback at the next performance.

Each one before lavin' the table spit in the emp'y plate or basin, an' it was again filled as at fus'.

When I saw that I cud'n help it, an' I ses "Shee Bannymee!" [peace bless us]. The minnit I spoke every light went out, an' the place was lef' in the dark, an' we hard a noise as if some things wor' goin' skutchin' urrof the door.

After a quile, Ned ses to me, "Juan, are tha' goin' in? I'm goin' to hev me suppar, anyway." So in we went togather, an' lit a candle, an' everything was jus' the same as we usually foun' it.

Theer was some suppar lef' on the table for us, bur I ses, "I'm not goin' to ate any lavins at all."

"Aw, is good enuf," ses Ned, as he et his suppar, bur I didn't tase a birra mate, but went to bed strite. Bur I pur a sore time in; I cud'n sleep, an' felt meself sore all over, and "maul pirreagh" [most miserable].

Ned wasn't a minit in bed till he was fas' ahead, an' snorin' urra massey.

When mornin' come, I forced meself to ger up to go to me work, bur I was "peendagh argle" [wretched].

Tha's the way it was for a week, goin' about lek a useless thing, and nor a birra hart at me.

Ballacormortha sed I hed a coul' thar I got with scrapin' about at nights, but Ned sed the lil people had put the "augh augh" on me for not atin' what they left for us. I warn' thinkin' much meself, for I was too "drolanagh" [heartless].

Well, one night I was tryin' lyin' to sleep, when Ned came to the bed. He had been out gallivantin', and hed jus' come in. He ses, "Come down with me if yer want to get battar, an' ate some of the fairies' lavins. I saw some of them in when I came home, an' if yer'll

come down an' show ye'r friendly to them by
atin' some of their mate, I bet yer'll soon be
battar."

"All right," I ses, an' down I crawl, an' tho'
I warn' hungry, I et a basin of pinjane an' some
coul' priddas tha' was on the table, and went
back to bed.

It warn' two minutes till I was fas' asleep,
an' I woke up in the mornin' arly, as soun' as a
bell, and ready for a hard day's work."



Outwitting the Devil.

[BY BILL BILLY.]

"I got the yarn I'm goin' to tell yer from an' oul' man tha' used to live down at the North. He said they wor' pirreagh hard up for a lil chapal to meet togathar in ov a Sunday for worship. Lots ov the farmers livin' roun' wor' middlin' well off, an' they wor' thinkin' it was time they hed a battar place till a barn, an' where they might be comfible an' dacent. So they called a meetin' one everin', an' it was settled to build a lil chapal.

Now, the Northside people hev got the name ov bein' middlin' free with their money. Bur I believe in me hart the Southside ones are jus' as kind-harted with a birra mate or the lek ov that, if they've gor it to spare. Enyway, big Johnny Teare gave them the groun', an' they got lave for all the stones they cud draw erruf the quarry. Joughan the mason got the job of doin' the buildin' an' the English praacher from town was to pur a lil sight on them sometimes, an' see that they wor' doin' all right.

Everybody was agreein' nice, an' the buildin' was goin' on bravely; an' the people wor' sayin' thar it wudn' be long, if the wather kep' fine, till they'd hev the roof on. Theer hed been nice dryin' for a while, an' then the weather bruk again, an' wan night theer was a ter'ble storm, an' nex' mornin' the walls ov the chapal wor' laval with the groun'. The poor masons

wor' gettin blamed (jus' lek they are yit) for their maul work, an' they wor' excusin' themselves, sayin' the walls wor' on'y green, an' cudn' be expected to stand.

Well, after a bir ov a houl' on, they agreed to pay the masons, so they made another start. After clearin' away the rubbidge, they began again, an' all went well till they wor' ready to set scaffold. Nex' mornin' when they cum to work, behoul' ye! the walls wor' down again, an' scatter'd that theer warn' one stone lef' stannin' atop ov another. All the mortar tubs an' the mason's tools wor' all scatter'd an' buried under the rubbidge.

Joughin was awful mad, an' began to jaw the men. They all said it warn' their fault, but that theer was some 'butcheragh' [witchcraft] on the place, an' they warn' goin to work on the job eny more:

So another meetin' was held by the people tha' was buildin' the chapal, an' they all agreed that they wudn' be bet, but they wud pay for the work tha' was done, and let the masons begin again.

The men warn' very willin' at fust to start again, bur at las' Joughin got them bissuaded, an' they started. Ye see, the winter was comin' on, an' the days wor' gettin' short, so they wor' anxious to ger it roofed while the weather was dry.

Everything seemed to be goin' on all right at las'. They hed been workin' ar it for several weeks, an' theer was no sign ov the walls givin' a bit, so everybody was thinkin' that the wuss was over, an' that they wudn' be bothared again.

The English praacher hed been out ar a farmhouse that night, seein' a man tha' was sick and not expected to ger over it. He was anxious to ger home, so as he knew the road, he started in the dark, expectin' to ger in the town by daylight. As he went pass the lil chapal on his way, he tuk a notion to hev a walk roun' it an' see how it was shapin'. As he

cum closer, he hard the soun' of dull heavy blows strikin' agin the wall.

He thought it queer tha' enybody wud be about at that time, for it was too arly for the masons to be at work. He warn' a coward, bur he began to get narvous, an' then he thought to himself, 'Why should I be afraid and run away, even if is the devil himself? Wasn' that the very rason he was a praacher, to fight the devil an' try an' save poor souls from him.' So up the lane he went, an' roun' to the other side of the chapal, an' he saw a quare sight.

An' oul' scraggy grey horse was backed up agin the walls, an' kickin' at them with his hind feet. At fust the praacher was inclined to laff, bur he soon saw it wasn'a laffin' matter, for the blows wor' beginnin' to make the walls tremble, so he went up to the horse to drive it away.

As he cum close, the horse noticed him an' stopped kickin', but before he could run away the praacher gripped him by the nose with both hands, an' said in a quiet voice, 'Thou are in my power now, an' as a horse thou will hev to labour for the cause thou has tried to hinder and destroy.'

The brute knew very well wha' he was sayin', for his eyes wor' flashin' lek fire with wickedness, an' the 'coughty' [wicked] baste foamed at the mouth an' struggled to ger away, bur it warn' eny use.

The devil hed tuk the shape ov a horse, an' the praacher gripped him lek a horse, an' held on to him, an' hed the mastery ov him, so at las', after a struggle, the brute hed to give in.

By this time the day hed bruk, and it was jus' beginnin' to get light. As the east began to get rosy with the risin' sun, the sleepin' craturs begun to stir themselves. Fust the cocks begun to crow a harty good mornin', an' then the sounds ov the cattle movin' in the farm yards, and the voices of the farmers an'

their man-sarvants, as they put their heds out to pur a sight on the weather, bruk on the quiet mornin' air.

The horse cudn' stan' the daylight an' the sounds of livin' craturs, so he begun to get restless again, an' it tuk all the strength an' pluck ov the preacher to houl' him.

It warn' long till he hard the soun' ov voices comin', an' soon the masons wor' at the place. They tuk ter'ble wonder to see the preacher there before them, howlin' on to an oul' horse.

Howavar, he didn' give them time to stan' lookin' ar'him, but shouted to them to ger him a bit of a thow an' make a halter, so thar he cud houl' the horse aisier, for his hands wor' beginnin' to get cramped and stiff. When the halter was pur on him, he tied him to a gate post, an' begun to consider what to do with him.

The masons seemed lek as if they wanted the skeet, but as the praacher didn' make a shape to tell them, they didn't lek to ask, so they started work.

One of the men ses to Joughin, 'We'll soon be stuck for stones, for Harry Bill's horse is lame, an' can't draw to-day.'

Then a notion tuk houl' ov the praacher to make the devil help to build the very place he was bent on destroyin', so he ses, 'This is a strong horse, though rather unruly an' difficult to manage, an' if the owner of the sick horse is willin' to lend his cart, I'll drive this horse an' fetch you stones from the quarry.'

One of the masons went to show him where Harry Bill lived, an' to ask for the loan of the cart. Ov coarse, Harry Bill was quite willin', poor man, so they cum back an' got the oul' horse, an' harnessed him in the cart, an' away to the quarry with tham.

'Deed, an' they hed a job gettin' the horse in the cart, bur at long las', after a deal of 'sthaaga' [bother], they managed it. Ov

coorse the quarrymen wor' surprised to see the praacher from town so soon in the mornir', an' especially to see him drivin' Harry Bill's cart. They sed, 'We'll hev to load light, for that baste won't be able to drag the cart up the road empty, let alone a good load.' But the praacher made them pur a good load on, an' all the time he stood by the horse's head, houlin' him.

When the cart was full, the men sed, 'The trace horse will be here in a few minutes to give yer a pull up the quarry road, for is alwis takin' two good horses to pull the loaded cart up the lane to the high road.'

'Navar mind,' ses the praacher, 'This horse is as strong as eny two in the parish.'

So he give him a lick with the whip, an' away he went lek smook, thinkin' nothin' ov it. When they gor up to the high road, the horse tried to bolt, an' it tuk the praacher all his time to houl' him in, so he lashed him with the whip, an' ripped at the lines, an' made the brute feel thar he was his mastar; so at las' the horse give in, an' went on pretty quate.

When they cum in sight ov the buildin', the horse tuk the sterriks again, an' the drivar hed to give him a good latherin' before he went on. At las', thor, he got the load kicked, an' started for another; an' the nex' time the oul' horse seemed more aisier, an' gradually he becum quiet enough, an' at las' went for his load without eny mustha.

It was gettin' on towards dinner time, an' the praacher hedn' a birra mate since the day before, so he was gettin' hungry. He sent word to Harry Bill to cum an' drive the cart in the everin'.

When Harry cum, the praacher toul' him that this was a rather queer horse in some ways, bur he would manage all right if he was firm with him. He said, 'I'm goin' for me dinner an' a short sleep, so I may be a while away; but on no account lave the horse's hed, or let go the lines till I cum back.'

'But the crathur'll want somethin' to ate, for all,' ses Harry Bill.

'No,' ses the praacher, 'Nawthin' till I cum back, an', if he gets botharsome, use the whip.'

'Well, well,' ses Harry Bill to the masons when the praacher hed gone. 'This is the queeras horse I avar seen. He don't want a 'scaveen' [morsel] to ate all day, an' yit he's as strong as eny two horses in the parish, an' yer can lather him all yer want. I'd lek to buy him; I wondar if he'd sell him chape.'

At las' Harry started for the quarry, walkin' by the horse's hed. The oul' horse went fuss rate, an' they gor a good load an' cum back an' kicked it.

One of the masons called to Harry, 'Well, how is thee self an' the horse gerrin' on?'

'Aw, bravely, bravely,' ses Harry Bill. 'I don't see nawthin' abour'im to make such a mustha about. He's strong uncommun, for all he's so 'maganagh' [awkward] lookin' bur I mus' be goin' for another load, I suppose,' an' he led the horse away.

Now, Harry Bill was a kind-harted man, an' he thought it wasn't justice to load the poor baste so hevy, for he thought it mus' be gettin' tired. When they wor' passin' the water trough at the public house, the horse showed signs he was gettin' dry. Harry druv pass, howavar, for he was thinkin' ov what the praacher hed ordered him.

At las', thor, as the everin' went on, Harry begun to get dry himself, an' when they wor' passin' the pub nex' time, he lef' the horse outside in the road, an' went in for a glass ov ale. As soon as he gor inside, he set down to drink his ale, an' got tawkin' with some other fallas that wor' in, an' forgot all about the horse an' cart.

After a quile, he thought on himself and jumped up, sayin', 'I mus' give the horse a drink an' be goin''. When he cum to the door, theer was the cartload o' stones in the middle

o' the road, but the horse was gone. He climbed up on the hedge an' looked all roun' the field's, but theer wasn' no horse to be seen, so he lef' the cart in the road, an' started for the buildin', expectin' he wud get in throuble for his neglect.

He met the praacher waitin' for him, an' towl him the truth, an' how he hed los' the horse, an' finished up by sayin', 'The devil mus' ha' been in the brute enyway.'

' Navar mind,' ses the praacher, ' You hev guessed the truth ; bur I think we hev given the rascal more than he bargained for, an' I don't think we shall be bothared with him hereafter.' "





